

In regards to the merger of ATT and T-Mobile, I feel this would be a terrible approach and would leave me without a cell phone carrier. This is because I use GSM phones and travel internationally, so I require a GSM to allow me to communicate while abroad. If this merger is allowed, then the entire GSM network for the US would be handed to a single company. This company has shown time and time again that they increase costs, reduce choices, and provide little to no customer service. Over the years, you can look at several examples to show this pattern of behavior.

1) Cingular buyout of AT&T Wireless

- a. Treated AT&T Wireless customers like they were second rate customers.
- b. Did not offer any handset upgrades to AT&T customers unless they would move to a more expensive plan with less minutes and data.
- c. Eventually, would not even answer questions about billing unless you “upgraded” to a more expensive plan.

2) SBC and AT&T practices of not allowing DSL to be delivered on “dry pair” phone lines.

- a. This essentially meant that they would not provide you with DSL service without paying to have a land line phone. Whether you needed a phone in your home or not.
- b. There was never a technological limitation to selling DSL without a phone line, but AT&T made this policy as a way of increasing revenue. This practice single handedly caused a reduced adoption of DSL (was a new technology like LTE at the time).
- c. Without the competition of cable companies this practice never would have been overturned. This is something that T-Mobile, Sprint, and Verizon are providing.

3) AT&T charges overage for using the internet on their phones

- a. The internet package I have with T-Mobile is unlimited, but even if you have a limited account from T-Mobile, overages are just handled at a reduced speed, not an increased cost. Charging overage (AT&T) instead of throttling overage (T-Mobile) creates a significant risk to new technology adoption.
- b. With an increase in cloud computing and a general drive to using the cloud for our needs moving forward, data limits and overage charges present a serious risk to stagnating this development for fear of overage charges. Additionally, it opens up any and all consumers to a serious risk in large or overwhelming cell phone bills. Finally, T-Mobile customers such as me would be forced off of a smart phone because of the overage fees. This means that I will not be able to afford the technology that has become such a staple of how we do business and interact today.

4) AT&T has now adopted a practice for charging overage for using the internet on your DSL line.

- a. Further example of AT&T increasing cost hand over foot and reducing our ability as a nation to move over to a digital country. With the growth of cloud computing and the introduction of “internet centric” devices such as iPhone, iPad, Android, CR-48 laptop from Google, Amazon cloud, Cloud printing, internet television, and software as a service (SAAS) companies must be working to reduce cost and allow increased bandwidth consumption.
- b. Practices like AT&T overage pricing will slow the development and adoption of these technologies and offer no benefit to the consumers. While this practice is not specifically directed towards the mobile market, the actions of this segment will surely be brought to the mobile segment in the future.

5) AT&T does not offer a variety of handsets. And does not keep up with the latest technology.

a. If you look at the device offering from AT&T compared to Sprint, T-Mobile, or Verizon you will notice that they offer fewer devices at higher prices than their competition. This practice reduces competition for device manufacturers and reduces choice for consumers.

b. One of the main reasons why I chose T-Mobile was that they allow open devices and vanilla Android devices on their network. This allows their customers to truly enjoy all that a device has to offer. AT&T again takes the opposite of only allowing very restricted devices that are behind their times from the day they are introduced to the public.

Traditionally in a capitalistic society such as that of the US, supply and demand determine market price however, AT&T's business model does not follow this rule. This is because they are already so large that they can "bully" their customers into whatever pricing model they want. They also do not have to offer the latest and greatest technology because they are so large that you have to do business with them regardless of how old and relegated their technology is. This company was once found in violation of anti-trust laws and was forced to break into the very pieces that they have been buying up over the years. AT&T never changed their business practices from the first anti-trust and they are working hard to have a second.

Again, allowing this buyout to go through would result in: zero competition in the GSM cellular market, reduced choice in cellular devices, unfair pricing practices, little to no customer support, and the treating of T-Mobile customers as second rate customers. This is not something that we cannot allow as we attempt to gain more penetration to rural markets, and inspire the kind of forward thinking that has brought us things like LTE and cloud computing.

Thanks.